

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 478

By Hargett

A RESOLUTION to honor Mr. Tommy Webster on his Grammy nomination and for his accomplishments as a gospel musician.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this General Assembly should pause to pay tribute to those noteworthy Tennesseans who, through their extraordinary musical talents have earned the universal respect of their peers in music; and

WHEREAS, throughout its illustrious history, Tennessee has been blessed with countless exemplary citizens who have made significant contributions to the music profession; and

WHEREAS, one such person is Mr. Tommy Webster, who was nominated for a Grammy Award for his sterling work as a member of the renowned gospel group, The Centurymen; and

WHEREAS, a dynamic member of the group since 1987, Mr. Webster is also the Minister of Music and Senior Adults at Ellendale Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, each member of The Centurymen has worked as a director of music in Baptist churches throughout the country, representing twenty-two states and two foreign countries. Although many of the group's members are originally from Tennessee, only Tommy Webster and one other member still reside in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the group is comprised of the nation's most talented and skilled musicians; its 135 members have performed both nationally and internationally in churches, concert halls, and on television; and

WHEREAS, The Centurymen have toured in the United States and abroad, including the People's Republic of China, Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Switzerland, Israel, and Brazil; and

WHEREAS, now in their thirty-first year, the group will appear at the Southern Baptist Convention Church Music Conference in Atlanta in June and will be recording a new album at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly in Ridgecrest, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, last year, The Centurymen performed live at the Dove Awards in Nashville, in addition to touring the midwestern and southern United States and Brazil; and

WHEREAS, recognized for their musical talents, The Centurymen have been nominated for their first Grammy Award for their extraordinary album, "Beautiful Star"; the album is one of six nominations in the classical crossover category; and

WHEREAS, bass singer Tommy Webster has spent his entire life fine-tuning his craft; he graduated cum laude with a bachelor of music degree from the Memphis State University in 1975 and received a master of arts in Religion and Education in 1981 from the Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, prior to his current position at Ellendale Baptist Church, Mr. Webster served as the minister of music and youth at Kensington Baptist Church and Speedway Terrace Baptist Church, both in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, highly respected in his field, Tommy is an active participant in a number of professional organizations, donating his remarkable talents as a member, former president, and former vice-president of the Tennessee Baptist Church Music Conference and as a member of the Church Music Conference singing group, the Tennessee Baptist Chorale; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Webster has also rendered honorable service as a former chairman, former associate chairman, and present Handbell Division Director of the Music Council; a past associate chairman of the Senior Adult Section of the Family Ministry Council; a member and music coordinator of the Pastor's Conference; a member, former president, and former program chairman of the Religious Education and Music Association; a member of the Shelby Singers, a chorale of local ministers of music; a member of the Executive Board; and a past member of the Finance Committee; and

WHEREAS, a civic-minded individual whose benevolent nature knows no bounds, Mr. Webster has been a volunteer firefighter for the Bartlett Fire Department since 1985 and has rendered astute service as a former president, vice-president, and secretary of the Volunteer Firefighters Association; and

WHEREAS, Tommy Webster epitomizes the spirit and commitment that is characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, Tommy Webster is most grateful for the love and encouragement he shares with his devoted wife, the former Karen Kay Mackie, and their children, Amy and Andrew; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge Mr. Tommy Webster for his dedication to The Centurymen, and commend him for his service as an exceptional representative of the vast array of musical talent within this state; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby congratulate Mr. Tommy Webster of the world-renowned and Grammy-nominated men's choir, The Centurymen, commending him on the group's outstanding success, and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

